

<b>Title of Report:</b>	<b>Planning Committee Report – LA01/2020/1051/F</b>
<b>Committee Report Submitted To:</b>	<b>Planning Committee</b>
<b>Date of Meeting:</b>	<b>23<sup>rd</sup> June 2021</b>
<b>For Decision or For Information</b>	<b>For Decision</b>

<b>Linkage to Council Strategy (2021-25)</b>	
Strategic Theme	Cohesive Leadership
Outcome	Council has agreed policies and procedures and decision making is consistent with them
Lead Officer	Development Management and Enforcement Manager

<b>Budgetary Considerations</b>	
Cost of Proposal	Nil
Included in Current Year Estimates	N/A
Capital/Revenue	N/A
Code	N/A
Staffing Costs	N/A

<b>Screening Requirements</b>	Required for new or revised Policies, Plans, Strategies or Service Delivery Proposals.		
Section 75 Screening	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	EQIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Rural Needs Assessment (RNA)	Screening Completed	N/A	Date:

	RNA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:
Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA)	Screening Completed:	N/A	Date:
	DPIA Required and Completed:	N/A	Date:

<b><u>App No:</u></b>	<b>LA01/2020/1051/F</b>	<b><u>Ward:</u></b>	<b>Portrush and Dunluce</b>
<b><u>App Type:</u></b>	<b>Full Planning</b>		
<b><u>Address:</u></b>	<b>Ramore Recreational Grounds Off Ramore Avenue, Portrush</b>		
<b><u>Proposal:</u></b>	<b>Proposed improvements to recreational grounds including the provision of new pavilion building, improvements to play areas, leisure areas and other associated spaces and features</b>		
<b><u>Con Area:</u></b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b><u>Valid Date:</u></b>	<b>28/09/2020</b>
<b><u>Listed Building Grade:</u></b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b><u>Target Date:</u></b>	<b>11/01/2020</b>
<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council, Riada House, 14 Charles Street, Ballymoney, BT53 6DZ</b>		
<b>Agent:</b>	<b>GM Design, 22 Lodge Road, Coleraine, BT52 1NB</b>		
<b>Objections:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Petitions of Objection:</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Support:</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>Petitions of Support:</b>	<b>0</b>

## **Executive Summary**

- This proposal is considered acceptable at this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan 2016 and all other material considerations.
- The site is located within Portrush settlement limit and Portrush Area of Archaeological Potential. The site falls within the Ramore Head Local Landscape Policy Area.
- 1 letter of objection and 1 letter of support have been received in relation to this application.
- No concerns have been raised by statutory consultees in relation to this proposal.
- The proposal will not adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of the designated Ramore Head LLPA.
- Given the nature of this development proposal to upgrade and improve the existing recreational facilities on site the proposal retains the zoned area of existing open space.
- The proposal is visually acceptable at this location and will not adversely harm neighbouring residential amenity.
- Noise and light pollution have been considered and are acceptable.
- There are no archaeological or listed building concerns.
- There are no objections from a drainage or flood risk perspective.
- There are no objections in relation to contamination.
- Natural Heritage interests are protected.
- The proposed development has satisfactory access and parking.
- The proposal complies with all relevant planning policies including the Northern Area Plan, SPPS, PSRNI, PPS 15, PPS 8, PPS 6, PPS 3 and PPS 2.

Drawings and additional information are available to view on the Planning Portal- <http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess>

## 1.0 RECOMMENDATION

- 1.1 That the Committee has taken into consideration and agrees with the reasons for the recommendation set out in section 9 and the policies and guidance in sections 7 and 8 and resolves to **APPROVE** planning permission subject to the conditions set out in section 10.

## 2.0 SITE LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

- 2.1 The application site is located at Ramore Recreational Grounds off Ramore Avenue, Portrush. The site is a rectangular shape and measures approx. 2.1 hectares in size. The site comprises a children's play park in the northern section which is at a lower ground level than the rest of the land. A single storey bowling pavilion building and two bowling greens exist with a small area for car parking. A hard surfaced area containing 8 tennis courts is located in the southern section of the site. Vehicle access to the site is gained from Ramore Avenue in the north eastern corner of the site or from Main Street in the south western corner of the site.
- 2.2 North east and east of the application site comprises a large car park and residential use in the form of dwellings and apartments. The terrace properties facing the development site vary in terms of design, finish and height. South of the application site are four storey residential units. North of the site is the coastal zone of Ramore Head and the access pathway leading to the Ramore Head walk. The open grassland areas of Ramore Hill bound the site to the west.
- 2.3 The site is located within Portrush settlement limit and Portrush Area of Archaeological Potential. The site falls within the Ramore Head Local Landscape Policy Area. The site is located within walking distance of Portrush Town Centre. The immediate context of the site is primarily residential in nature.

### **3.0 RELEVANT HISTORY**

#### **3.1 LA01/2020/0630/PAN**

Ramore Recreational Grounds, Off Ramore Avenue, Portrush  
Proposed improvements to recreational grounds including the provision of new pavilion building, improvements to play areas, leisure areas and other associated spaces and features  
PAN Acceptable - 15.07.2020

#### **3.2 LA01/2018/0244/PAD**

Ramore Recreational Grounds, Off Ramore Avenue, Portrush  
Proposal to potentially include an Urban Play and Pump Track, new 2-storey Pavilion with external BBQ areas and seating, Sensory area, picnic space, upgrade of existing play facilities, signature play park, improved footpath access, simplified paths (incl along Ramore Head), car parking provision to facilitate Bowlers only, lighting throughout, focus area for skateboarding, utilisation of existing embankment as an amphitheatre and space requirement for up to 15,000 people for summer events - e g Pipe Band Events, Air Show etc, Bowling Green and Tennis Court provision to be reviewed.  
Withdrawn - 01.03.2018

#### **3.3 C/2005/0180/F**

Bowling Green at Portrush Recreation Grounds, Ramore Avenue, Portrush  
Proposed Floodlighting to Bowling Green  
Approval - 03.08.2005

### **4.0 THE APPLICATION**

4.1 Proposed improvements to recreational grounds including the provision of new pavilion building, improvements to play areas, leisure areas and other associated spaces and features.

#### **Proposal of Application Notice**

4.2 As this application is considered a major application it must comply with the Proposal of Application Notice and carry out community consultation at least 12 weeks prior to the submission of the application.

4.3 A Proposal of Application Notice was received electronically on the 26<sup>th</sup> June 2020 under application LA01/2020/0630/PAN. As a result of Covid-19 it has not been possible to hold any face to face public events. The Planning (Development Management) (Temporary Modifications) (Coronavirus) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2020 temporarily suspend the requirement for a Pre-Application Community Consultation public event. The applicant advised that they intended to undertake the following forms of consultation:

- A consultation event via an online platform to be advertised in the Coleraine Chronicle and Coleraine Times.
- Online Question & Answer Session advertised by the newspaper, council website and social media platforms and distribution leaflets to those in local area (within 90m of site boundary)
- Powerpoint presentation and questionnaire will be made available online with opportunity for feedback
- Phone line service available for public feedback to design team
- Availability of material by post or email on request
- Promotion of consultation process on Council's website and social media platforms
- Elected members for the District Electoral Area being given a copy of the Proposal of Application Notice.

### **Community Consultation Report**

4.4 The community consultation report was submitted as part of the planning application, received on 28th September 2020 which is more than 12 weeks after the Proposal of Application Notice was received, as required by the legislation.

4.5 The community consultation report contained details about Methodology and Timeline; Promotion & Advertising; and Community Consultation in terms of the process, responses and feedback. The report demonstrates that consultation was implemented as agreed in the Proposal of Application Notice.

4.6 The public event was held online using Zoom. The event was held on 2 different occasions – evening slot and lunch slot on different dates. The Zoom events comprised of a presentation

by the Council and Design Team, followed by a Question & Answer session. Presentation material and a feedback form was made available on the Council's website for those who were unable to view or participate in the Zoom events and for anyone wishing to provide feedback. For those unable to access material online, presentation boards were erected at Portrush Recreation Grounds in 3 locations and were available to view throughout the consultation period. The design teams contact details were provided on all presentation material allowing the community to provide comment via phone, email or post.

- 4.7 The proposed works and associated community consultation exercise has been extensively promoted and advertised since the submission of the Proposal of Application Notice. Advertisements occurred in local and regional newspapers. It was promoted via Facebook and Twitter. Locally elected members were informed of the proposed works. Leaflets were delivered to neighbouring properties located within a 100m radius of the site.
- 4.8 19 people attended the online consultation events and 23 questions were asked and subsequently answered. Feedback forms and additional comments were forwarded to the design team via email and telephone. For a review of all queries please see paragraph 4.6 of the Pre-Application Community Consultation Report (Doc 02) submitted in support of this application.
- 4.9 All feedback received was considered and changes were made to the design proposals such as:
- Pathways incorporated to facilitate a running route within the grounds
  - Additional landscaping and tree planting
  - Standard swings for teenagers within the adventure play area
  - Boundary treatments to the play area improved for child safety precautions
- 4.10 The community consultation report demonstrates that adequate community consultation has taken place and the feedback received has been considered prior to the submission of the application.

## **Design & Access Statement**

- 4.11 A Design & Access Statement is required under Article 6 of the Planning (General Development Procedure) Order (NI) 2015 as the application is considered to be a major application.
- 4.12 A design and access statement (Doc 01) received on 28<sup>th</sup> September 2020 was submitted in support of this application. This statement demonstrates how the proposal is suitable with regards to the site and its setting and demonstrates that it can be adequately accessed by prospective users. The design principals and concepts considered relate to the setting, proposed works, integration, scale, massing and finishes. The site access was considered in relation to vehicular access, pedestrian access, mobility/sight impaired, pavilion building access and adventure play area – access and boundaries. Environmental Sustainability was also considered.
- 4.13 The applicant has undertaken detailed consideration of the proposal in terms of the design principles and concepts, the site access and the impact on the character of the immediate context.

## **Environmental Impact Assessment**

- 4.14 Upon review of the application against The Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2017, the proposal is not considered to fall within the descriptions of development detailed in Schedule 2. The proposal is an upgrade and improvement of the existing facilities on site. The existing play park is being enhanced and the existing bowling club pavilion is being replaced. A bowling green, synthetic training bowling green, multi-use recreation space and an informal seating and recreation area is being provided. The existing recreational facilities are basically being transformed by this proposal but the land use of the site remains as recreational use. Accordingly, an EIA determination was not required.

## **Habitats Regulations Assessment**

- 4.15 The application was considered in light of the assessment requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural



Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended) by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Planning Authority.

- 4.16 The proposal is in proximity to Skerries and Causeway SAC, Ramore Head and the Skerries ASSI. The applicant submitted a Habitats Regulations Assessment (Doc 04) in support of this application. DAERA and SES were consulted in relation to this application and express no objections. The proposed development will not result in an adverse impact upon designated sites.
- 4.17 The potential impact of this proposal on Special Protection Areas, Special Areas of Conservation and Ramsar sites has been assessed in accordance with the requirements of Regulation 43 (1) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats, etc.) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1995 (as amended). The proposal would not be likely to have a significant effect on the features of any European site.

## **5.0 PUBLICITY & CONSULTATIONS**

### **5.1 External:**

1 letter of objection has been received in relation to this application from No. 7 Ramore Avenue. The objection is a copy of the letter originally sent to GM Design raising concerns and asking several questions relating to the development proposal. The main issues raised are summarised below and will be considered and assessed in the remainder of this report:

- Finance and costs
- Limited scope of proposal for limited section of population - Project design lacks consideration for the range of ages of people who live in Portrush
- Light and Noise pollution
- Anti-social behaviour
- Visual impact upon Ramore Head
- Loss of tennis courts
- Lack of a Muga pitch for various sports and outdoor gym for all to use
- Lack of café facility

- Enquiry about whether the bowling club lease the use of the land and facilities from the council

1 letter of support has been received in relation to this application from Cara Hunter MLA stating that the proposal would be of great benefit to the town and local residents.

## 5.2 **Internal:**

NI Water (No objections)

Environmental Health (No objections)

DFI Rivers (No objections)

DFI Roads (No objections)

Historic Environment Division: Historic Monuments (No objections)

Historic Environment Division: Historic Buildings (No objections)

Shared Environmental Services (No objections)

DAERA: Water Management Unit and Inland Fisheries (No objections)

DAERA: Regulation Unit Land and Groundwater Team (No objections)

DAERA: Natural Environment Division (No objections)

DAERA: Marine and Fisheries Division (No objections)

## 6.0 **MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 45(1) of the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 requires that all applications must have regard to the local plan, so far as material to the application, and all other material considerations. Section 6(4) states that in making any

determination where regard is to be had to the local development plan, the determination must be made in accordance with the plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

6.2 The development plan is:

- Northern Area Plan 2016 (NAP)

6.3 The Regional Development Strategy (RDS) is a material consideration.

6.4 The Strategic Planning Policy Statement for Northern Ireland (SPPS) is a material consideration. As set out in the SPPS, until such times as a new local plan strategy is adopted, councils will apply specified retained operational policies.

6.5 Due weight should be given to the relevant policies in the development plan.

6.6 All material considerations and any policy conflicts are identified in the “Considerations and Assessment” section of the report.

## **7.0 RELEVANT POLICIES & GUIDANCE**

The Northern Area Plan 2016

Strategic Planning Policy Statement (SPPS)

The Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland

PPS 2 – Natural Heritage

PPS 3 - Access, Movement and Parking

PPS 6 – Planning, Archaeology & the Built Heritage

PPS 8 – Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation

PPS 15 – Planning and Flood Risk

## **Supplementary Planning Guidance**

### Development Control Advice Note 15 Vehicular Access Standards

## **8.0 CONSIDERATIONS & ASSESSMENT**

### **Planning Policy**

- 8.1 The site is located within Portrush settlement limit and Portrush Area of Archaeological Potential. Policy SET 2 of NAP 2016 applies for development within settlement development limits. Planning permission will be granted provided that the proposal is sensitive to the size and character of the settlement. The site falls within the Ramore Head LLPA (Designation PHL 01) from NAP 2016. Policy ENV 1 of NAP 2016 falls for consideration as this applies to LLPAs. The proposal is in close proximity to European and National designated sites – The Skerries and Causeway SAC and Ramore Head and Skerries ASSI.
- 8.2 The proposal must be considered having regard to the NAP 2016, SPPS, PPS policy documents and supplementary planning guidance specified above. The main considerations in the determination of this application relate to: Impact on LLPA, open space, sport and outdoor recreation, design of pavilion building, archaeology and the built heritage, flooding, sewerage, contamination, access and parking and natural heritage.

### **Impact on LLPA**

- 8.3 The site falls within the Ramore Head LLPA (Designation PHL 01) from NAP 2016. Policy ENV 1 of NAP 2016 applies for LLPAs and development proposals must not adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of a designated LLPA. Ramore Head LLPA features of importance include:
- The prominent dolerite headland which is one of the outstanding natural features of the North Coast
  - An area of great geological and landscape interest as well as being in the Ramore Head and the Skerries ASSI

- The area is almost entirely in public ownership, with most of the headland used for passive recreation with a network of paths. It includes an area of recreation grounds provided by the Borough Council and the NIEA Portrush Countryside Centre.

Uses ancillary to the enjoyment of open space and existing recreational facilities will be given favourable consideration.

- 8.4 The proposal includes improvement works to restore this site. New works include a new adventure play area, new bowling pavilion and public toilets, enhanced competition bowling green and synthetic practice area, a new informal seating and recreation area and an upgrade of public realm within the site with the inclusion of a multi-use space.
- 8.5 Policy ENV 1 states favourable consideration will be given to uses ancillary to the enjoyment of open space and existing recreational facilities. The proposed works seek to modernise the existing recreational facilities on the site as well as providing some new recreational spaces. The redeveloped site is to be more accessible by the public as walking/running tracks are included as well as an informal seating and recreation area. The nature of this proposal is to promote the use of open space and outdoor recreation and is therefore an acceptable land use at this location. An objection was raised in relation to the visual impact upon Ramore Head however, this proposal respects the Ramore Head LLPA features of importance. The proposal will not adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of the designated Ramore Head LLPA.

### **Open Space, Sport and Outdoor Recreation**

- 8.6 The proposal entails a new adventure play area in the same location as the existing play area. The new play equipment will be constructed from timber as the predominant material and will combine features such as play boulders. Some of the existing play equipment from the site will be refurbished and re-used within the site and combined with a new suite of high quality play equipment. Various play equipment will be positioned throughout – details of which can be seen on Drawing No. 08A.

- 8.7 The play area is located on a wetpour rubber safety surface. The boundary treatment of the play park is a 1.8m high paladin fence and 1.5m high bespoke iron railings mounted on a retaining wall. This retaining wall will be constructed of dressed black basalt stone. The entrance will be 2.3m high double iron pedestrian and maintenance gates. All railings panels, gate and intermediate posts to be galvanised and polyester powder coated colour green. Previously the existing play area was at a much lower level than the rest of the site, but this scheme seeks to link the play area by removing the existing retaining wall and replacing it with a graded grass embankment.
- 8.8 The existing pavilion building is to be demolished and replaced with a new single storey building with a mono-pitched roof. This building contains a committee room, changing and toilet facilities, plant rooms and maintenance stores. The building is to be positioned south of the play park.
- 8.9 Immediately south of the new pavilion building is the enhanced bowling green with viewing areas positioned either side. The bowling green will be enclosed by a 1.8m high paladin fence. East of this is a new synthetic training bowling green which will be enclosed by a 1.2m high paladin fence.
- 8.10 The existing tennis courts have been removed and replaced with a multi-use recreation space located in the southern section of the site which will be finished in sand carpet grass.
- 8.11 The original proposal included an urban sports area in the south eastern corner of the site adjacent to housing however, this was amended to be an informal seating and recreation area. This area will comprise granite paving flags and setts, granite blocks and walls, grass and planting.
- 8.12 Throughout this site various street furniture is proposed such as litter bins, timber seats, seat walls, timber bollards, bicycle stands and boulder features. Soft works throughout the scheme consist of areas of grass, grass mounding, and planting. The scheme shows various pathways for walking/running which will be finished in exposed aggregate concrete.
- 8.13 New lighting is proposed throughout the site. 6m high lighting columns are proposed with varying light fittings. For full details of

locations see Drawing No. 16B (Site Lighting Installation locations) and for specific lighting details see Doc 12. The bowling green external floodlights and columns will remain as existing.

- 8.14 Boundaries of the entire site consist of retention of the existing 1.2m high stainless steel railings adjacent to Ramore Avenue. The northern boundary is formed by 1.5m high bespoke iron railings mounted on a retaining wall. The western boundary of the site is defined by an existing 1.8m high paladin fence. Access points will be created to make the site more accessible to pedestrians. There is a gated access from Main Street along the southern boundary and the reinforced grass area for parking has proposed hedging adjacent to housing.
- 8.15 The application site has been zoned as a major area of existing open space in NAP 2016. Policy OS 1 refers to the Protection of Open Space in PPS 8. The Planning Authority will not permit development that would result in the loss of existing open space or land zoned for the provision of open space. The presumption against the loss of existing open space will apply irrespective of its physical condition and appearance. Given the nature of this development proposal to upgrade and improve the existing recreational facilities on site the proposal complies with this policy requirement.
- 8.16 Policy OS 4 of PPS 8 refers to Intensive Sports Facilities. The Planning Authority will only permit the development of intensive sports facilities where these are located within settlements. The application site is located with Portrush settlement limit.
- 8.17 In all cases the development of intensive sports facilities will be required to meet all the following criteria:
- *there is no unacceptable impact on the amenities of people living nearby by reason of the siting, scale, extent, frequency or timing of the sporting activities proposed, including any noise or light pollution likely to be generated;*
- 8.18 The proposal is an upgrade on the existing recreational facilities on site. An objection was raised in relation to noise and light pollution.
- 8.19 Details of the lighting scheme and the specification of the fittings have been submitted. It is stated that the design of the lighting

scheme and specification of fittings has the primary objective or ensuring well-lit and safe spaces, without inappropriate overspill at boundaries. Environmental Health was consulted and advised the agent should ensure the lighting scheme is suitably designed to ensure there is no light pollution due to spill or glare affecting sensitive receptors. The applicant should have regard to the Institute of Lighting Professionals Guidelines, GN 01/20 – “Guidance Notes for the Reduction of Obtrusive Light”. The lighting scheme proposed is considered satisfactory without detrimental harm to residential amenity.

- 8.20 An email from the agent dated 18<sup>th</sup> March 2021 advised the application site will be used by all sectors of the local and wider community for a wide range of leisure, recreational and social purposes including enjoying the area on foot, bike, jogging, rollerblade, scooter, skateboard etc. Environmental Health was consulted with this information and advised it may be pertinent to apply a planning condition limiting proposed hours of use.
- 8.21 This application site is an urban area no different to other urban places within Portrush. These types of activities can already occur along West Bay or East Bay promenades or the rear of public realm adjacent to Station Square, Barry’s and Kerr Street. There are no measures of controlling noise from these types of activities but it is not envisaged this would result in excessive noise resulting in an unacceptable adverse impact on neighbouring residential amenity. Properties located along Ramore Avenue, to the east of the site, are separated by an existing road from the development site. No. 21 Ramore Street is located to the south of the site adjacent to the informal seating and recreation area, but this property has a blank gable adjacent which will help act as a sound barrier. It is important to note that no area within the application site is a dedicated skateboarding area and floodlighting is not proposed throughout the whole site to encourage usage during sensitive night-time hours. A condition limiting hours of use of the application site is not considered appropriate as the objective of the regeneration of this recreational space is to open it up to the public to encourage use.
- 8.22 Following assessment of noise and light pollution, there should be no unacceptable impact on neighbouring residential amenity.



- *there is no adverse impact on features of importance to nature conservation, archaeology or built heritage;*

8.23 Consultations occurred with HED, DAERA and SES who have no objections in relation to his application. For full assessment see sub-headings “Archaeology & the Built Heritage” and “Natural Heritage”.

- *buildings or structures are designed to a high standard, are of a scale appropriate to the local area or townscape and are sympathetic to the surrounding environment in terms of their siting, layout and landscape treatment;*

8.24 The proposed layout and design of this scheme incorporating various sports facilities and a new pavilion building is considered acceptable and suitable for this area in Portrush. Proposed surfacing, materials and finishes as well as proposed boundary treatments are considered satisfactory. The proposal seeks to bring visual enhancement to this area.

- *the proposed facility takes into account the needs of people with disabilities and is located so as to be accessible to the catchment population giving priority to walking, cycling and public transport;*

8.25 The site has been made more accessible. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving are located at both entrance points. Disabled parking spaces have been located close to the Pavilion building. Internal pathways have been suitably designed. Bicycle stands have been provided. Public toilets have been provided as part of the Pavilion building and have level access for disabled users.

- *the road network can safely handle the extra vehicular traffic the proposal will generate and satisfactory arrangements are provided for site access, car parking, drainage and waste disposal.*

8.26 The proposal meets this requirement. Consultation occurred with DFI Roads who have no objections. For full assessment see sub-heading “Access and Parking”. Drainage and waste disposal are considered satisfactory but for full assessment see sub-headings “Flooding” and “Sewerage”.

8.27 The proposal is considered to meet all the requirements of Policy OS 4 of PPS 8. The proposed scheme is visually suitable for this area and will improve the existing recreational facilities at this site.

8.28 Policy OS 7 of PPS 8 relates to floodlighting. This policy is not considered relevant as no new floodlighting is proposed. The existing floodlighting for the bowling green is to remain as existing.

8.29 An objector raised several concerns about this scheme which will be addressed below.

- Queries were asked about finance and costs but this is outside the remit of Planning.
- Concern was expressed at a lack of a café but this option was considered unaffordable by Council. There is a hard surfaced area to the rear of the pavilion to accommodate mobile catering units or 'pop up' cafes for events and seasonable usage.
- Loss of tennis courts was a concern raised. Tennis provision at the site was discounted following engagement with 2 local tennis clubs who advised they were not willing to relocate to this area to sustain activity on the site all year round.
- Lack of a MUGA pitch was a concern expressed. Council has plans to develop MUGAs alongside pitch developments in the area which is more sustainable to operate. However, the bowling green surface could be used for other activities if there is demand during the bowling off season.
- Outdoor gym equipment is not provided in this proposal. Council has considered that the unused space to the south of the bowling green could be a future location for outdoor gym equipment but this is dependent upon funding constraints and may be developed after the initial project.
- Anti-social behaviour was a concern raised but the proposed siting of various components, lighting, fencing and potential CCTV will assist with management of this. CCTV is included for around the pavilion building and inside the main lobby of the public toilets.

- An enquiry was raised about whether the bowling club lease the use of the land and facilities from the council. The management and operation of the bowling facilities are subject to a new lease agreement which is private and is of no relevance to this planning application.
- Another concern relates to the limited scope of proposal for limited section of population - Project design lacks consideration for the range of ages of people who live in Portrush. This proposal is essentially an upgrade and improvement of the existing recreational facilities except for the loss of the existing tennis courts but these are being replaced with a multi-use recreational space. The site includes pathways which can be used for walking or running and there is an informal seating and recreation area which could be utilised by all ages of the population.

8.30 All objections have been considered and assessed. The proposal is visually acceptable at this location and the existing zoned open space is being protected with the continued use of recreation at the site. The proposal complies with Policies OS 1 and OS 4 of PPS 8.

### **Design of the Pavilion Building**

8.31 Policy DES 2 of a Planning Strategy for Rural Northern Ireland is relevant for consideration. Policy DES 2 requires development proposals in towns and villages to be sensitive to the character of the area in terms of design, scale and use of materials.

8.32 The existing pavilion building is to be demolished and replaced with a new single storey building in a semi-circular form with a mono-pitched roof. The dimensions of this proposed building is approx. 45.4m long with a maximum width of 8.7m and a height of 4.6m. The proposed pavilion building contains a committee room, changing and toilet facilities, plant rooms and maintenance stores. The building is to be positioned south of the play park. The design, scale and massing of this new building is acceptable. The building is to be finished in white render for the walls, standing seam effect grey roof, black aluminium doors, windows and downpipes. Plans show timber louvre panels with doors to the bin store and grass clippings store. These proposed materials/finishes are considered satisfactory. The design of the pavilion building is

acceptable and complies with the requirements of Policy DES 2 as it respects the character and appearance of the surrounding area.

### **Archaeology & the Built Heritage**

- 8.33 The site is located within Portrush Area of Archaeological Potential so consultation occurred with HED: Historic Monuments who advised the site represents an area in which the potential for uncovering archaeological features during development is considerable. The proposed development area is located close to the site of the late medieval castle (ANT002:001) and to a number of features of potential archaeological significance (including a boggy area and a pond where survival of archaeological material may be high) depicted on a late 16<sup>th</sup> century map of Portrush. Little archaeological investigation has taken place within or around Ramore headland and the area is one where we would expect to find evidence for prehistoric activity.
- 8.34 HED: Historic Monuments is content that the proposal satisfies PPS 6 policy requirements, subject to conditions for the agreement and implementation of a developer-funded programme of archaeological works. This is to identify and record any archaeological remains in advance of new construction, or to provide for their preservation in situ, as per Policy BH 4 of PPS 6. Archaeological evaluation of the proposed development area should commence as soon as possible within the development programme, to allow for the resolution of archaeological issues arising, which may include preservation of archaeological remains through alteration of the design.
- 8.35 Consultation also occurred with HED: Historic Buildings who advised the site is within proximity to HB03/10/061 Shelter, Lower Lansdowne Road, Portrush, which is a Grade B2 Listed Building of special architectural and historic interest. HED: Historic Buildings has no objections because the focus of the proposal is in the opposite direction of the land outshot and it is sufficiently removed from the listed building, to have no greater demonstrable harm on its setting when considered against the policy requirements of the SPPS and PPS 6.

## **Flooding**

- 8.36 A Drainage Assessment was submitted in support of this application. Following consultation with DFI Rivers the Flood Hazard Map (NI) indicates that the development does not lie within the 1 in 100 year fluvial or 1 in 200 year coastal flood plain. DFI Rivers advised there are no designated watercourses within the site.
- 8.37 DFI Rivers requested additional information to demonstrate the viability of the proposal such as:
- A full micro drainage output for the entire drainage network
  - Clarity in relation to managing exceedance for the 100 year return
  - Information on the hydraulic capacity and structural integrity of the existing drainage network within the site and the existing outlets into the sea, that are to be utilised.
- 8.38 This information was received and further consultation occurred with DFI Rivers who expressed no objections. DFI Rivers, while not being responsible for the preparation of the Drainage Assessment accepts its logic and has no reason to disagree with its conclusions. DFI Rivers cannot sustain a reason to object to the proposed development from a drainage or flood risk perspective. The proposal complies with Policies FLD 1, FLD 2 & FLD 3 of PPS 15.

## **Sewerage**

- 8.39 NI Water was consulted in relation to this application and expressed no objections. The applicant proposes to discharge foul sewage to a treatment plant and to discharge surface water to the sea.
- 8.40 DAERA: Water Management Unit (WMU) was consulted in relation to this application and concerns were raised that the proposal has the potential to adversely affect the surface water environment. WMU have no record of a consent to discharge at this location. The applicant should be aware there is no guarantee that discharge consent will be granted. WMU will need to consider the suitability of the proposed means of effluent disposal and a number of site specific factors.

8.41 To ensure the protection of the water environment planning conditions should be applied to any permission granted. No development should take place until the method of sewage disposal has been agreed with NI Water or a consent to discharge has been approved. A full Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) should be submitted at least 8 weeks prior to the commencement of construction.

### **Contamination**

8.42 Consultation occurred with DAERA: Regulation Unit (RU) (Land and Groundwater Team) to consider the potential for contamination to be present at the site that could impact on environmentally sensitive receptors including groundwater and surface water.

8.43 RU note that there are no significant records of previous potentially contaminating land uses on this application site or in the adjacent area. The proposed development is therefore considered to be a low risk to the water environment. RU have no objections to this development provided conditions and informatives are placed on the planning decision notice.

8.44 Environmental Health was consulted and have no objections from a contamination perspective provided planning conditions issue with any approval granted. The applicant is advised that the onus to consider land contamination risk and ensure that a site is safe and suitable for its intended use rests with the developer.

### **Access and Parking**

8.45 Planning permission will only be granted provided the proposal does not prejudice road safety or significantly inconvenience the flow of traffic. DFI Roads was consulted in relation to this application and queried why the new vehicular access which was constructed onto Ramore Avenue is not being utilised for this proposal.

8.46 Additional information was received by the agent in an email dated 8/02/2021 clarifying the objectives and nature of this proposal. The email advised the scheme seeks to adapt, renew and re-invigorate the existing “recreational grounds” as an urban park and public realm. This also retains but upgrades some of the historic

facilities of this part of Portrush – Bowling Green, Children’s Play and multi-purpose open space – but omits the large number of tennis courts. It is essentially a less intensive replacement of the existing facilities on the site. Consistent with these objectives and supported by its location within the Peninsula with adjacent extensive areas of car parking, the scheme has been designed for safe pedestrian and associated informal use. There will be no vehicular access except for controlled access for disabled, maintenance, servicing and emergency. Vehicular access will also be permitted on occasions, as required, for bowling club members following on from arrangements to date. The existing facility currently provides 11 car parking spaces. The current application provides 4 ‘disability’ parking spaces convenient to the bowling pavilion which will be finished in concrete paving. Any other occasional parking demand, e.g. bowling club, will be accommodated by the balance of 7 spaces on an informal re-enforced grass area at the southern periphery of the site.

- 8.47 DFI Roads were re-consulted with this additional information and advised they will now accept the controlled use of access off Main Street as use of this access will be restricted to Bowling Club members, maintenance and emergency vehicles. DFI Roads have no further objections to this proposal. The proposal complies with Policies AMP 1, 2 and 7 of PPS 3.

### **Natural Heritage**

- 8.48 DAERA: Marine and Fisheries Division (M&FD) was consulted in relation to this application and has considered the impacts of this proposal on the marine environment. The proposal is in proximity to Skerries and Causeway SAC, Ramore Head and the Skerries ASSI. M&FD advise provided appropriate pollution prevention measures are implemented during construction and operation, the proposal is unlikely to have a significant impact on the marine environment.
- 8.49 DAERA: Natural Environment Division (NED) was consulted in relation to this application. The application site is adjacent to Skerries and Causeway SAC, Ramore Head and The Skerries ASSI. The proposed development is hydrologically linked to the designated sites.

- 8.50 A Preliminary Ecological Appraisal (PEA) & NI Biodiversity Checklist, Emergence/Re-entry Survey (Bats), Nesting Bird Survey, Ornithology Mitigation Plan and Outline Construction Method Statement was submitted in support of this application.
- 8.51 NED advise that polluting impacts arising during the construction and operational phases of the development could result in significant impacts to the habitats and species of the designated sites. Surface water drainage shall discharge into the sea and foul sewage shall be disposed of via a treatment plant. Plans show a domestic packaged sewage treatment plant with rotating biological contractor is to be installed a minimum of 7m from the proposed building. There should be no direct discharge to the sea of untreated surface water and foul water. Provided all measures noted in the CMS, HRA, PEA and ornithological mitigation plan reports are adhered to NED considers that the proposed development is unlikely to impact designated sites.
- 8.52 The PEA and Biodiversity Checklist identified the site as being species poor and highly disturbed due to footfall. A survey was undertaken for Bats, Badgers, Birds and Otters. An emergence/re-entry survey (bats) was required, while a nesting bird survey and ornithology mitigation plan was also provided. No signs of otters or badgers were found on site.
- 8.53 The Emergence/Re-entry surveys (bats) were undertaken on 25/06/2020 and 23/07/2020. No emerging or re-entering bats were recorded during the survey only commuting bats. It was noted that floodlights were already in operation at this site. These are to be replaced like for like using the Bat Conservation Trust (BCT) guide; recommendations on lighting. It was advised by the ecologist undertaking the survey that a bat roost survey should be undertaken prior to demolition of the existing building. Additional roosting opportunities have been suggested by the ecologist for the outside of the building in the form of bat boxes/bricks. NED looks favourably on the suggestion of adding bat boxes/bricks if located in appropriated locations. Eolas Ecology assessed the works as having no adverse impact on roosting bats.
- 8.54 The ASSI supports locally significant breeding populations. The survey for breeding birds found only eight species within the red-line boundary. Three nests were found in the pavilion building and a nest found in a stone wall. The survey results indicated that the



development site provided very little habitat suitable for breeding or foraging birds. The surrounding area is also subject to substantial human disturbance. It is therefore unlikely that the proposed works will have a significant adverse impact upon local bird populations. The planned increase in grass cover, hedgerows and other amenity plantings associated with the project will probably result in a net increase in biodiversity.

8.55 NED has considered the impacts of the proposal on natural heritage interests and, on the basis of the information provided, has no objections, subject to conditions.

8.56 In relation to this application, consultation also occurred with SES who have no objections to this proposal subject to conditions. Having considered the nature, scale, timing, duration and location of the project, it is concluded that, provided mitigation is conditioned in any planning approval, the proposal will not have an adverse effect on site integrity of any European Site. Mitigation measures relate to submission of a Final Construction Method Statement and ensuring a practical solution to sewage disposal is possible at this site. This will help protect features of Skerries and Causeway SAC.

8.57 Following assessment, the proposal is acceptable in terms of natural heritage interests and is considered to meet the requirements of Policies NH 1, 2, 3 & 5 of PPS 2.

## **9.0 CONCLUSION**

9.1 The proposal is considered acceptable at this location having regard to the Northern Area Plan 2016 and other material considerations. The proposal meets the requirements of planning policies for this type of development. The proposal will not adversely affect the environmental quality, integrity or character of the designated Ramore Head LLPA. Given the nature of this development proposal to upgrade and improve the existing recreational facilities on site, the proposal retains the zoned area of existing open space. The scale and massing of the proposed pavilion building is acceptable. The proposal is visually acceptable at this location and will not adversely harm neighbouring residential amenity. The proposal is acceptable in terms of noise and light

pollution. There are no archaeological or listed building concerns. There are no objections to this proposed development from a drainage or flood risk perspective. To ensure the protection of the water environment planning conditions should be applied to any permission granted. There are no objections from a contamination perspective provided planning conditions issue with any approval granted. The proposal is acceptable in terms of natural heritage interests. The proposed development has satisfactory access and parking. Approval is recommended.

## 10 CONDITIONS

1. As required by Section 61 the Planning Act (Northern Ireland) 2011 the development hereby permitted shall be begun before the expiration of 5 years from the date of this permission.

Reason: Time Limit.

2. No site works of any nature or development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (POW) has been prepared by a qualified archaeologist, submitted by the applicant and approved in writing by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council in consultation with Historic Environment Division, Department for Communities. The POW shall provide for:
  - The identification and evaluation of archaeological remains within the site;
  - Mitigation of the impacts of development through licensed excavation recording or by preservation of remains in-situ;
  - Post-excavation analysis sufficient to prepare an archaeological report, to publication standard if necessary; and
  - Preparation of the digital, documentary and material archive for deposition.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

3. No site works of any nature or development shall take place other than in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition 2.

Reason: to ensure that archaeological remains within the application site are properly identified, and protected or appropriately recorded.

4. A programme of post-excavation analysis, preparation of an archaeological report, dissemination of results and preparation of the excavation archive shall be undertaken in accordance with the programme of archaeological work approved under condition 2. These measures shall be implemented and a final archaeological report shall be submitted to Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council within 12 months of the completion of archaeological site works, or as otherwise agreed in writing with Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council.

Reason: To ensure that the results of archaeological works are appropriately analysed and disseminated and the excavation archive is prepared to a suitable standard for deposition.

5. No development shall take place on-site until the method of sewage disposal has been agreed in writing with Northern Ireland Water (NIW) or a Consent to discharge for a private WWTW has been granted under the terms of the Water (NI) Order 1999 by DAERA: WMU.

Reason: To ensure a practical solution to sewage disposal is possible at this site that will negate adverse impacts to SAC features. To ensure protection to the aquatic environment and to help the applicant avoid incurring unnecessary expense before it can be ascertained that a feasible method of sewage disposal is available. The applicant should note this also includes the purchase of any waste water treatment system.

6. The appointed contractor must submit a site specific Final Construction Method Statement (CMS) for approval by Causeway Coast and Glens Borough Council before commencement of any works on site. This plan should contain all the appropriate environmental mitigation as detailed in the outline CMS by GM Designs Associates dated 03/11/2020 and the comments of NIEA WMU and NED dated 26/11/2020. The CMS shall include all necessary mitigation methodologies for the protection of the water environment.

Reason: To ensure that the appointed contractor is aware of and implements the appropriate environmental mitigation during construction phase that will negate any potential effects on the features of Skerries and Causeway SAC, the water environment and any mobile marine mammals in the area.

7. If during the development works, new contamination or risks are encountered which have not previously been identified, works should cease and the Planning Authority shall be notified immediately. This new contamination shall be fully investigated in accordance with the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance. In the event of unacceptable risks being identified, a Remediation Strategy shall be agreed with the Planning Authority in writing, and subsequently implemented and verified to its satisfaction. This strategy should be completed by competent persons in accordance with Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use.

8. After completing the remediation works under Condition 7 and prior to occupation of the development, a Verification Report needs to be submitted in writing and agreed with Planning Authority. This report should be completed by competent persons in accordance with the Model Procedures for the Land Contamination: Risk Management (LCRM) guidance. The Verification Report should present all the remediation and monitoring works undertaken and demonstrate the effectiveness of the works in managing all the risks and achieving the remedial objectives.

Reason: Protection of environmental receptors to ensure the site is suitable for use

9. Within twenty-four hours prior to demolition, the existing buildings on the site shall be checked for bat presence by a competent ecologist and all demolition works shall be monitored by a competent ecologist. A report of the demolition shall be submitted to the Planning Authority within 2 weeks from that date.

Reason: To ensure protection to bats and their roosts.

10. The measures listed in the Ornithological Mitigation Plan: Ramore Recreation Ground, Portrush (June 2020) by K. Leonard, Sterna Environmental Ltd (Pages 9-13) – (DOC 10) must be fully implemented so that this project is very unlikely to have a significant adverse impact on any bird populations using the site or surrounding area.

Reason: To ensure protection to ornithology interest at the site.

11. As detailed, within the Outline Construction Method Statement, a full, detailed, site specific Construction Method Statement including details of the appointment of an Ecological Clerk of Works (ECoW) and their roles and responsibilities will be provided by the appointed Contractor and submitted to the Planning Authority for approval in writing by relevant authorities, prior to works commencing.

Reason: To mitigate for impacts on protected species on a nearby designated site.

## **11 INFORMATIVES**

1. This permission does not confer title. It is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that he controls all the lands necessary to carry out the proposed development.
2. This approval does not dispense with the necessity of obtaining the permission of the owners of adjacent dwellings for the removal of or building on the party wall or boundary whether or not defined.
3. This permission does not alter or extinguish or otherwise affect any existing or valid right of way crossing, impinging or otherwise pertaining to these lands.
4. This determination relates to planning control only and does not cover any consent or approval which may be necessary to authorise the development under other prevailing legislation as may be administered by the Council or other statutory authority.

5. You should refer to any other general advice and guidance provided by consultees in the process of this planning application by reviewing all responses on the Planning Portal at <http://epicpublic.planningni.gov.uk/publicaccess/>.

6. HED advise the following:

Please refer to the HED guidance document Development and Archaeology: Guidance on Archaeological Works in the Planning Process which contains advice on how to fulfil the requirements of the archaeological conditions attached to your planning approval.

Please allow sufficient time in advance of the commencement of site works for the agreement of the programme of archaeological work document with the planning authority and for your archaeological consultant to obtain an archaeological excavation licence. For guidance on the preparation of the programme of archaeological work please contact:

Historic Environment Division – Heritage Development & Change Branch

Ground Floor

9 Lanyon Place

Belfast

BT1 3LP

Tel: 02890 823100

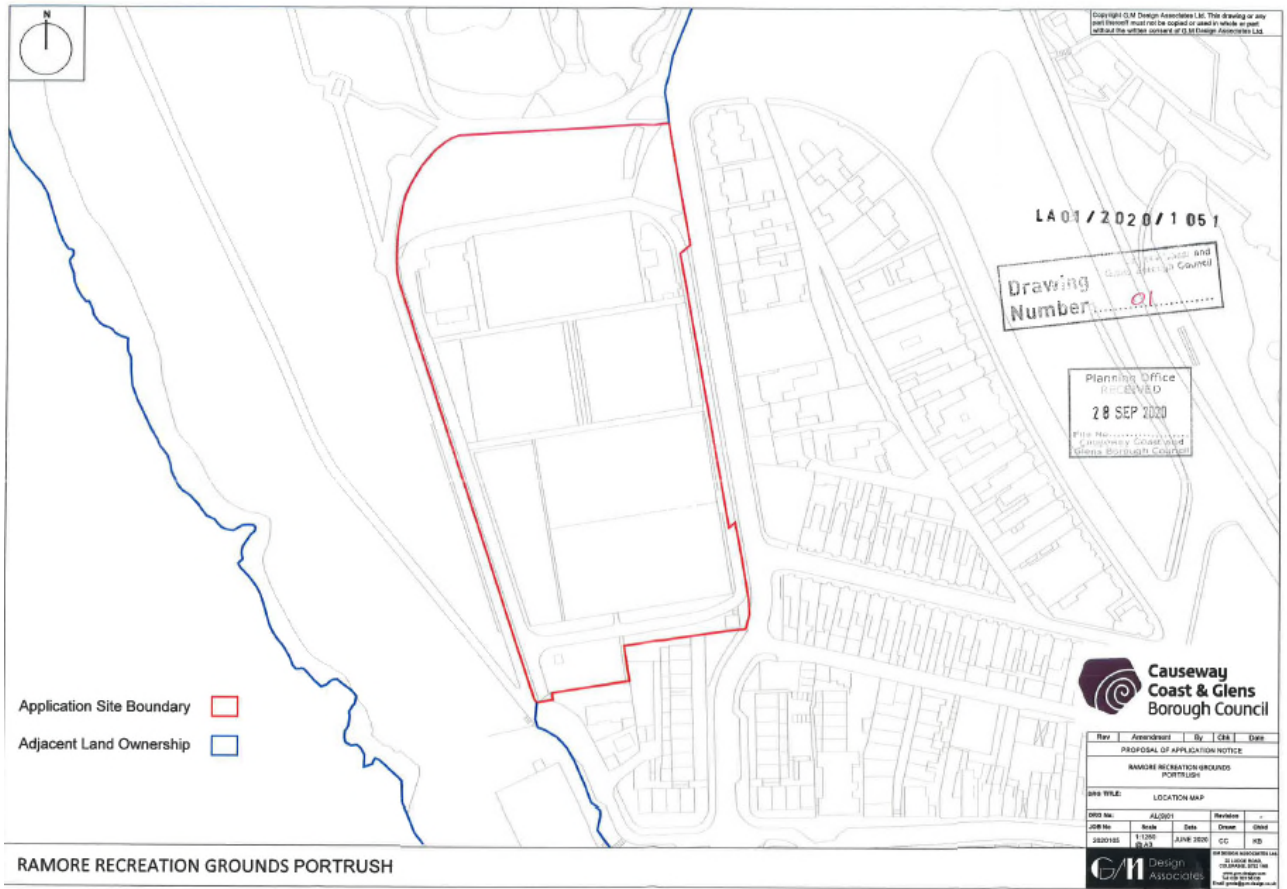
Email: [HEDPlanning.General@communities-ni.gov.uk](mailto:HEDPlanning.General@communities-ni.gov.uk)

Quote reference: SM11/1 ANT002:001 and LA01/2020/1051/F

7. DAERA: Regulation Unit advise the following:

The purpose of Conditions 7 and 8 are to ensure that the site risk assessment and remediation work is undertaken to a standard that enables safe development and enduse of the site such that it would not be determined as contaminated land under the forthcoming Contaminated Land legislation i.e. Part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land Order (NI) 1997. It remains the responsibility of the developer to undertake and demonstrate that the works have been effective in managing all risks.

# Site Location Map



# Block Plan





# Addendum

## LA01/2020/1051/F

### 1.0 Update

1.1 The original letter of support received from Cara Hunter MLA has been withdrawn. A total of 5 letters of support for this application have now been received from members of the public and from the Secretary of Portrush Bowling Club. These representations are summarised below:

- The Secretary of Portrush Bowling Club advises of potential engagement with the community as part of the club development plan emphasising the benefits of bowls as this is a sport which can be played by all ages. With enhanced facilities the club will be able to host more regional and national competitions helping to bring tourists to the area.
- Redevelopment will maximise the use of this land to provide an enhanced visual amenity as well as an area which will provide social and health and wellbeing benefits for the local community and visitors to Portrush.
- The events space is a much needed addition to the town.
- The redevelopment is long overdue and will have many benefits for Portrush and its local community as well as being an attraction to visitors who come to Portrush for their holidays.

1.2 79 further letters of objection have been received in relation to this application. Concerns expressed are detailed below:

- Removal of Skate Park from original plans which were presented for public consultation. Contrary to legislation laid down in planning law which allows objectors to make representation on advertised applications.
- The removal of the skate park from the scheme and failure to re-consult on the revised scheme contravenes the guidance.

- The included parking area was not presented during public consultation.
- Pre-planning community consultation and engagement has been inadequate throughout the development of the scheme and has contravened guidance.
- The final submitted scheme has not been adequately advertised with incorrect/outdated versions of the scheme being circulated to councillors and placed on the public portal.
- Original proposal included a tennis court, cycle bump track and urban sports facility which have all been removed despite receiving support from the community.
- The application has had substantial changes from the pre-application public consultation process which renders consultation seriously flawed and invalid.
- Proposal does not add value to Portrush in terms of adequate amenities for local residents and tourists.
- Inadequate recreation facilities to provide for younger people, teenagers and adults.
- Removal of Skate Park which has been sought after for years.
- Removal of the tennis courts.
- Provision of one tennis court is inadequate.
- Over emphasis on bowling.
- Lack of provision of public toilets at Bowling Pavilion.
- Design of Pavilion building.
- The pavilion should be open to the public and provide facilities for a range of uses such as a cafe and changing rooms in order to facilitate tennis lessons, family days out and pay and play options for locals and tourists.
- Existing facilities should be maintained and upgraded. Instead, the proposal is reducing amenities to reduce maintenance costs.
- Proposal is a waste of money.
- The proposal should include tennis courts, mini golf or crazy golf, putting green, skate park, bike track, basketball court, 5 a side pitch, green space landscaping, floodlighting, community centre, café etc.

- Children's play park using 'refurbished & reused' equipment.
- This proposal should entail a park like those at Megaw Park in Ballymoney or Diversity Park in Portstewart.
- Tiering/Terracing planned for Ramore Head which is an Area of Special Scientific Interest.
- Rate payers money is being wasted on improving the car park/viewing platform at Dunluce Castle/Whiterocks.

## **2.0 Assessment**

- 2.1 In reference to removal of the skate park, Environmental Health was consulted and raised concern with potential noise from the proposed urban sports area. To address this issue of noise, at the option of the Agent, the skate park was removed from the plans and replaced with a new informal seating and recreation area. While the skate park was removed from original plans that were presented for public consultation, this amendment is not a significant change to the proposal as a whole. Neighbour notification occurred on amended plans showing removal of the skate park on 02 March 2021.
- 2.2 A tennis court or cycle bump track at no stage was included in the planning application drawings. The specific components of the scheme are a matter for the agent/ applicant.
- 2.3 Objectors advise the proposed parking area was not presented during public consultation. However, this level of detail would normally be submitted at full planning stage and does not affect the overall concept of the development proposal for the purposes of pre-application community consultation.
- 2.4 Loss of tennis courts is a concern raised. The specific components of the scheme are a matter for the agent/ applicant.
- 2.5 The children's playpark is using refurbished/ reused equipment but new equipment is also proposed. Similarly, this is a matter for the agent/ applicant.
- 2.6 The proposal is argued to lack consideration for the range of ages of people who live in Portrush. This proposal is essentially an upgrade and improvement of the existing recreational facilities

except for the loss of the existing tennis courts. However, these are being replaced with a multi-use recreational space. The site includes pathways which can be used for walking or running and there is an informal seating and recreation area which could be utilised by all ages of the population.

- 2.7 In relation to the design of the Pavilion Building, refer to assessment contained in paragraphs 8.31 and 8.32 in the planning committee report. Toilets are proposed within the Pavilion Building and the intention is for them to be accessible by the public.
- 2.8 No tiering/terracing is proposed for Ramore Head as part of this planning application.
- 2.9 Queries about finance and costs are outside the remit of planning.
- 2.10 All objections have been considered and assessed. The proposal is visually acceptable at this location and the existing identified open space is being protected with the continued use of recreation at the site.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

- 3.1 That the Committee note the contents of this Addendum and agree with the recommendation to approve the proposed development in accordance with paragraph 1.1 of the Planning Committee report.